



City of Montgomery

For additional questions or concerns about COVID-19 or the vaccine contact us at [mayor@montgomeryal.gov](mailto:mayor@montgomeryal.gov). We will do our best to submit questions to medical and public health professionals and respond as soon as possible.

# COVID-19 Vaccine Myth vs Facts

MYTH: I can get COVID-19 from taking the vaccine.



**FACT: The vaccine does not cause COVID-19.** None of the COVID-19 vaccines that are currently being distributed or in development contain the live COVID-19 virus. Rather, the vaccine prepares your immune system to recognize (and fight) the virus.

However, it is important to note that since it typically takes 1-2 weeks for the body to build immunity against COVID-19 after you get the second vaccine dose, so it is still possible for you to become infected or sick until a full 1-2 weeks after your second vaccine dose. (Also important to remember that because the vaccine is ~95% effective, there is still a small but real that you can get COVID after getting the vaccine).

MYTH: Certain groups in the U.S. are being given the vaccine first as an experiment.



**FACT: There is no experimentation in the vaccine prioritization or distribution plan.** Health care workers and residents of long-term care facilities will have priority access to the COVID-19 vaccine. Then the vaccine will go to frontline essential workers and people 75 years and older, followed by people with high-risk medical conditions, people aged 65-74 years and other categories of essential workers. States have the final say over which groups are first in line for any vaccine.

Alabama Department of Health has publicized its [Vaccination Allocation Plan](#) on their website. For more information, please visit the ADPH website.

MYTH: We don't know what's in the vaccine.



**FACT: Pfizer and Moderna (manufacturers of the two vaccines authorized for emergency use as of January 1, 2021) published a list of all ingredients, which are currently posted on the FDA website.** Both the [Pfizer](#) and [Moderna](#) vaccines utilize a technology called messenger RNA (mRNA) which teaches your body how to respond to COVID-19, as well as lipids (fats) that help transport the vaccine into your body.

MYTH: The vaccine is not safe because it was developed too fast.



**FACT: The COVID-19 vaccination technology had been in development for over a decade.** This is because the COVID-19 virus is not altogether new to us: It is caused by a coronavirus. Prior to the current COVID-19 outbreak, scientists had been researching other coronavirus vaccines, for diseases such as SARS and MERS. When the pandemic hit, scientists were able to build on this research (with more financial resources than ever before) to develop the COVID vaccines.

MYTH: I could get sick because of vaccine side effects.



**FACT: You may have some side effects from the COVID-19 vaccination, which are normal signs that your body is building protection from the virus.** Common side effects are pain and swelling on the arm where you received the shot, fever, chills, tiredness, and headache (similar to flu vaccine side effects), which go away in a few days at most.

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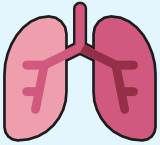
Sources: Resolve to Save Lives, CDC, Science News, National Public Radio. This information is based on currently available scientific evidence, reports, emergency use authorization details and expert opinion, and is subject to change. This document will be updated as necessary evidence and information about the COVID-19 vaccine in Montgomery becomes available.

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MYTH: As an older adult or a person with an underlying health condition, I will have more vaccine side effects.

**FACT: Vaccine side effects are not dramatically different in people of different ages; in fact, older adults are likely to have fewer side effects.** This is because their immune systems are weaker so are likely to have a less severe reaction to the vaccine's spike protein being identified in their body. The fact that the immune system of older adults is weaker is the exact reason why vaccination is so important in the elderly.



MYTH: I will have more vaccine side effects because I have chronic or underlying health conditions (e.g. heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, and obesity).

**FACT: There is no data to indicate that anyone with chronic or underlying health conditions would have a different response to the vaccine.** In fact, the vaccine is particularly important for these individuals because people with these conditions are more likely to get very sick from COVID-19.



MYTH: The COVID-19 vaccine could get into my DNA.

**FACT: mRNA, the technology used in the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, is not able to alter, interrupt, or impact your genetic makeup (DNA).** Rather, it instructs our body on how to fight the virus. The mRNA from a COVID-19 vaccine never enter the nucleus of the cell, which is where our DNA are kept. This means the mRNA does not affect or interact with our DNA in any way. Instead, COVID-19 vaccines that use mRNA work with the body's natural defenses to safely develop protection (immunity) to disease.



MYTH: I don't have to wear a mask or social distance after getting the vaccine.

**FACT: Unfortunately, you do! It will be important to keep wearing masks, practicing social distancing, and washing hands even after getting the COVID-19 vaccine.** This is because while we know the vaccine is remarkably good at preventing serious illness, we do not yet know if it prevents you from carrying—and thus spreading—the virus. You should continue to wear your mask even after being vaccinated until the spread of COVID-19 is under control.



MYTH: I have already had COVID-19 so I don't need to take the vaccine.

**FACT: Taking the vaccine even if you have had COVID-19 will help make sure you are protected.** We don't know how long immunity to COVID will last yet, and it is possible to contract COVID more than once. Experts agree that even if you've had COVID, you should get vaccinated.



MYTH: The fact that children cannot get the vaccine proves it is dangerous.

**The reason that the Pfizer vaccine is only authorized for children aged 16 and older and the Moderna vaccine for people 18 year of age and older is because the clinical trials for these vaccines did not include enough children to make a general authorization.** These companies (and others) are currently doing additional trials to ensure that the vaccine is equally safe and effective in children. We expect to know this information this year.



MYTH: There will be hidden costs associated with the vaccine.

**FACT: All vaccines provided through the US government will be free of charge to all individuals, including those without insurance.** Health care providers will be allowed to charge a fee for giving the shots. For those who have insurance, your information will be collected so the vaccine provider can bill for administrative costs.